

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00191 101748Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 ACDA-07 TRSE-00 IO-13  
/071 W

-----101756Z 125590 /47

O R 101714Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1254  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 191

E..9. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SY, ZF, PINT, MOPS  
SUBJECT: COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS IN LEBANON

REF: BEIRUT 0096

1. DISCUSSED ANNOUNCEMENT BY "QUADRAPARTITE COMMITTEE"  
(REFTEL) SETTING JANUARY 12 DEADLINE FOR COLLECTION OF  
HEAVY WEAPONS AND FOR PALESTINIAN  
REGULAR FORCES TO LEAVE  
COUNTRY WITH COS SHIHABI JANUARY 10. ASKED SHIHABI WHICH  
ELEMENT HAD BEEN MOST ACTIVE IN PUSHING FOR THIS ANNOUNCE-  
MENT. HE REPLIED IMMEDIATELY, SYRIA. DAMASCUS, HE SAID,  
WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE EXTENSIVE DELAY IN BEGINNING  
WEAPONS COLLECTION. HE ANTICIPATES EACH ELEMENT WILL  
FURNISH LIST OF WEAPONS IT CONTROLS BY THE JANUARY 12  
DEADLINE AND "EVERY LIST WILL BE A TIE." SYRIA, HOWEVER,  
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KNOWS WHERE AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF THE WEAPONS ARE  
ALREADY HIDDEN AND PLANS BEGIN A WIDE-SPREAD ARMS SWEEP  
UP  
JANUARY 13. HE UNABLE PREDICT THE TIME WHICH  
WILL BE REQUIRED TO FINISH THE OPERATION BUT INCLINED  
BELIEVE THAT WHILE IT WILL INVOLVE SOME FIGHTING, THE  
ACTUAL CONFLICT WILL BE LIMITED AND ADF, I.E.,

SYRIA, WILL PREVAIL. HE STRESSED SYRIAN DETERMINATION TO CRACK WHATEVER HEADS MAY BE NECESSARY IN THE PROCESS.

2. CONCERNING THE PALESTINIAN "REGULAR FORCES," SHIHABI SAID THIS PART OF ANNOUNCEMENT WAS DIRECTED AT THE REMNANTS OF PLA'S QADISIYYA AND HITTIN BRIGADES WHICH HAD DEFECTED TO ARAFAT AND THE REJECTIONISTS LAST SUMMER. HE ESTIMATED NUMBERS INVOLVED TO BE BETWEEN 150-250 OFFICERS AND MEN. THE ANNOUNCEMENT ALSO INTENDED COVER THOSE ELEMENTS REMAINING IN LEBANON OF THE AIN JALLUT BRIGADE WHICH MUST NOW RETURN TO EGYPT. (HE DID NOT HAVE FIGURE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE ON NUMBER INVOLVED.) FINALLY, HE SAID, THE REFERENCE WAS TO THOSE "IRAQI REGULARS" NUMBERING ABOUT 900-1,200 STILL IN LEBANON.

3. ASKED WHERE THE QADISIYYA/HITTIN ELEMENTS WERE EXPECTED TO GO, THE GENERAL SMILED THINLY AND SAID "WE HAVE TOLD THEM THEY ARE WELCOME IN DAMASCUS BUT ASSUME THEY WILL GO TO BAGHDAD.

4. SHIHABI MADE CLEAR THAT THE JANUARY 12 DEADLINE IS CONCEIVED AS THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS NOT THE COMPLETION.

5. COMMENT:

OTHERS MAY FEAR SYRIAN ACTIONS ARE WEAKENING SARKIS BY MOVING TOO FAST AND MAKING HIM APPEAR A PUPPET. TOP SARG COMMAND, CONFIDENTIAL

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HOWEVER, CLEARLY BELIEVES SARKIS' INABILITY TO START HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION RISKS FURTHER DESTABILIZATION IN LEBANON. THIS WE BELIEVE TO HAVE BEEN OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION PROMPTING THIS LATEST SYRIAN INITIATIVE. MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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